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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

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March 2008

Message from the President

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

There are a lot of activities going on with amateur radio this time of year. As the weather gets better around here we have the March of Dimes support activity and for those poor folk that live in snow country, there are a various contests on the weekends to take their mind off the long cold winters. Then you have those snow birds that go to far away places to set up a radio station and talk to me.

Around here it's spring time and the weather is great. This weekend Skip AF6HC, Jerry KG6TT and I went to the top of the ridgeline behind my house to check out what it's like up there. We thought it might be an interesting Field Day location. From my house it took Skip and I 30 minutes to drive to Lagoon Valley, go through the locked fence, lock the locked fence, then drive to the top. At the top the elevation is 904' above mean sea level. My house is at 124' above MSL according to my GPS.

What we found was a former radar site converted to a commercial communications site sitting on top of a hill over looking Vacaville to the east and Fairfield to the west. Lagoon Lake looks pretty small from up there.

Lots of joggers and hikers were walking that trail up to the top with an audience of steers all around them. We had a beautiful day to make this field trip, the wind was only slight and the view was out to Benicia looking west and the Buttes near Chico to the northeast.

I don't know if this is going to work for Field Day, we'll talk about it at the meeting. The good news would be that we could operate late into the night from this location.

Lagoon Valley will be the site of another activity next month in the March of Dimes Walk-a-Thon. Please see the announcement about that activity in the newsletter.

IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the President……1
February Meeting Minutes……2
March of Dimes……2
WD-40……2
Clipperton Island DXpedition……3
Dean Straw N6BV Retires……4
Kartoon Korner……5
Membership Application……5

On HF a couple of interesting DXpeditions have taken place since last month. The Ducie Island VP6DX DXpedition completed operations last week. I call this back yard DX because the location was in our neighborhood so to speak. I know of several club members that worked them during their operation.

Skip AF6HC came over to my house one evening during their operation and worked VP6DX on both phone and CW without much difficulty. I set up the keyer with Skip's call sign for CW, he only had to push the button one time and they came back to him with a 599, talk about fast. Skip and I sat around and talked for awhile about stuff. When VP6DX came up on 4Øm phone, Skip worked them again in short order. We had fun working Ducie Island from Vacaville.

Now just as VP6DX is finished, another group of DXpeditionaires sailed from Point Loma in San Diego south to Clipperton Island. The trip took a week of sailing south at 10 knots to get there. Their website tells me the WX conditions are hot hot hot. Temperatures are 110 degrees during the day with tropical storms visiting all the time.

Their scheduled QRV time was delayed by a day due mostly to the weather. Now that they're on the air everything is fine. Naturally Tom N6AJR worked them first and most often, Jerry KG6TT and I have also worked TX5C a couple of times as well. This group will be on the air for a week or so and is pretty easy to work. As time goes by, the pile up will be reduced so it will become easier on all the bands. As of this writing I have worked TX5C both CW and phone on both the 15m and 17m bands. Lots of fun w/amateur radio right now.

What kind of bird is that anyway? 73! See you at the meeting.

Vaca Valley Radio Club Meeting Notes of Wednesday 13 February 2ØØ8

Club President Jerry Olive (KD6WKY), called the February, 2ØØ8, general membership meeting of the Vaca Valley Radio Club to order at 193Ø hours, with the following members and guests in attendance:

Jerry Olive	KD6WKY	Tom Lish	N6AJR
Skip Lawson	AF6HC	Bob Hewitt	K6HEW
Antonio DelRio	N6ZGB	Jerry Volpe	KG6TT
Clyde Hood	WH6AB	Kim Ware	KI6JNX
Tom Christman	KE6MDM	Jim Latham	AF6AQ

Since no changes were necessary to the Jan. meeting notes, it was motioned/seconded and voted to accept the notes as published in the newsletter.

Our Treasurer, Bob (K6HEW), reported that we presently stand at $944.Ø2 in the General fund; $691.47 in the Repeater fund; $36.ØØ in the Prize fund; and $49.ØØ in the ARRL fund.

OLD BUSINESS: None addressed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jim Latham, (AF6AQ), our ARRL Eastbay section manager, shared that the ARRL is looking for volunteers to fill various 2yr appointments in this area. Get in touch with Jim at af6aq@arrl.org if you'd like to get more involved with the league at the local level. He also recommended that members keep up to date regarding the *Pavpaws* radar situation by visiting the ARRL web site.

Pres. Jerry displayed his "*Suit Sat*" (AO-54) certificate and gave a brief talk about what the Suit Sat was, and why, ending on the note that "*Suit Sat-II*" is now in the planning stage. More to be learned in the future.

Our community relations coordinator, Clyde (WH6AB), said that he was looking into the upcoming March of Dimes "Walk America", or as it's now called - the "March for Babies". Again - more info will be forthcoming.

We closed the evening by holding both the evening's drawing, and the HRO Gift Certificate drawing that was approved in the January meeting. Our Treasurer – Bob (K6HEW) won both!! Congrats Bob!

So, once again, with the cookies and coffee all gone and no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 2Ø18hr.

Respectfully submitted,

"*Skip*" Lawson AF6HC

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2008 ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Vice President: Mike Vieira, W6MAV
Secretary: Skip Larson, AF6HC
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, W6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Mike Carney, N6SEE
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Tom Christman, KE6MDM
Director: Clyde Hood, WH6AB

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Activities Chairperson: Clyde Hood, WH6AB
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

MARCH OF DIMES

(Walk for babies)

The annual March of Dimes 5 and 10 K walk will be held this year on Saturday, April 19 at Lagoon Valley. We will be providing communications between various spots along the route and at the start/finish line. This is always a fun event. We will be taking signups at our March meeting on the 12th. You may also signup by contacting Bob Hewitt, 448-5665 or hewbob@cwnet.com. We hope to see you there.

WD-40 - Water Displacement #40

Submitted by Skip Lawson AF6HC

The product began from a search for a rust preventative solvent and degreaser to protect missile parts.

WD-40 was created in 1953 by three technicians at the San Diego Rocket Chemical Company. Its name comes from the project that was to find a "water displacement" compound. They were successful with the fortieth formulation, thus WD-40. The Corvair Company bought it in bulk to protect their atlas missile parts.

The workers were so pleased with the product, they began smuggling (also known as "shrinkage" or "stealing") it out to use at home. The executives decided there might be a consumer market for it and put it in aerosol cans. The rest, as they say, is history.

It is a carefully guarded recipe known only to four people. Only one of them is the "brew master." There are about 2.5 million gallons of the stuff manufactured each year. It gets its distinctive smell from a fragrance that is added to the brew.

Ken East (one of the original founders) says there is nothing in WD-40 that would hurt you. When you read the "shower door" part, try it. It's the first thing that has ever

cleaned that spotty shower door. If yours is plastic, it works just as well as glass. It's a miracle! Then try it on your stove-top...Voila! It's now shinier than it's ever been. You'll be amazed.

Here are some of the uses:

<> Protects silver from tarnishing.

<> Cleans and lubricates guitar strings.

<> Gives floors that 'just-waxed' sheen wo/making it slippery.

<> Keeps flies off cows.

<> Restores and cleans chalkboards.

<> Removes lipstick stains. (*Editor's note*—Now he tells me!)

<> Loosens stubborn zippers.

<> Untangles jewelry chains.

<> Removes stains from stainless steel sinks.

Clipperton Island DXpedition History

Clipperton Island (French: Île de Clipperton and as the real French name Île de la Passion) is a nine-square-kilometer coral atoll in the North Pacific Ocean, southwest of Mexico and west of Costa Rica, at 10°18'N, 109°13'W. It has no permanent inhabitants.

It is an overseas possession of France administered by the Minister of Overseas France.

History

Some say that Clipperton was discovered by Ferdinand Magellan in 1521, but there is no evidence of this. Some historians believe it unlikely that Magellan would have been so far north, and so far east in the Pacific. Magellan's first confirmed landfall in the Pacific was Guam.

Clipperton's name comes from John Clipperton, an English pirate and privateer who in 1704 fought the Spanish during the early 18th century and is said to have passed by the island. Some others say he used the island as a hidden base for his raids on shipping, yet there is no text that ever proved the version. The legend might have helped keep his name alive to the present day.

Its real name, Île de la Passion ("Passion island"), was officially given in 1711 by French discoverers Martin de Chassiron and Michel Du Bocage, commanding the French ships La Princesse and La Découverte, who reached the island, drew the first map, and annexed it for France. The first scientific expedition took place in 1725 by the Frenchman M. Bocage, who lived on the island for several months. In 1858 it was formally claimed by France.

The American Guano Mining Company, under the Guano Islands Act of 1856, claimed the island for the United States of America, with earlier claim disputes to island guano tracing back to the Oceanic Phosphate Company with Mexico in 1848-49.

On November 17, 1858, under Emperor Napoleon III, the French annexed Clipperton as part of their South Sea colony Tahiti. Mexico reasserted its claim over the island, on December 13, 1897, occupying and annexing it, and established a military outpost on the island; it appointed military governors from that time, including Ramón Arnaud (1906-15) and Victoriano Álvarez (1917). The US again held it briefly during the Spanish American War of 1898.

The British Pacific Island Company acquired the rights in 1906 to Clipperton's guano deposits and, in conjunction with the Mexican government, built a mining settlement. That year, a lighthouse was erected under the orders of President Porfirio Díaz, and a military garrison under Captain Arnaud of the Mexican army was sent to the island. By 1914, about 100 people – men, women, and children – were living on the island. Every two months, a ship from Acapulco sailed to Clipperton with provisions. However, with the escalation of fighting in the Mexican Revolution, the atoll was no longer reachable by ship, and the island's inhabitants were left to their own devices.

By 1915, most of the inhabitants had died, and the last settlers wanted to leave on the US Navy warship Lexington, which had reached the atoll in late 1915. However, the Mexican military governor declared that evacuation was not necessary.

By 1917, all but one of the males on the island had died, some in a failed attempt to sail to the mainland and fetch help. The lighthouse keeper, Victoriano Álvarez, found himself the last man on Clipperton island, along with 15 women and children. Álvarez promptly proclaimed himself king and began a rampage of rape and murder, before being killed by one of the recipients of his attentions, the widow of garrison commander Captain Ramón Arnaud. On July 18, 1917, almost immediately following Álvarez's death, four women and six children, the last survivors, were picked up by the US Navy gunship USS Yorktown.

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

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Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
http://users.cwnet.com/hewbob/vvrc
Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-) WV6F 440.025(+) WV6F 1291.900(-)

Ownership of Clipperton was then disputed between France and Mexico. France approached the Vatican for a decision on ownership and, in 1930, the Vatican assigned the arbitration to the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel, who on January 28, 1931, declared Clipperton a French possession. The French rebuilt the lighthouse and settled a military outpost on the island, which remained for seven years before being abandoned. In 1935 France took possession; it has since been administered by the French colonial high commissioner for French Polynesia.

In the late 1930s, Clipperton was visited twice by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who wanted it to become a US possession for use as an airbase for Pacific Ocean operations. In 1944, he ordered the US Navy to occupy the island (until 1945) in one of the most secret US operations of World War II. Rear Admiral Byrd undertook several expeditions to the island to assess its potential as an airbase.

The island has been abandoned since WW II; since then it has only been visited by sport fishermen, regularly scheduled patrols by the French Navy, and Mexican tuna and shark fishermen. There have been infrequent scientific and amateur radio expeditions, and, on one occasion, Jacques-Yves Cousteau visited with his team of divers and a survivor from the 1917 evacuation.

In 1962, the independence of Algeria threatened further French nuclear testing at Algerian sites. The French Ministry of Defence considered Clipperton as a possible replacement test site; however, due to the island's hostile climate and remote location, this was eventually ruled out.

The French explored reopening the lagoon and developing a harbour for trade and tourism during the 1970s. An automatic weather installation was completed on April 7, 1980. The data collected by this station are transmitted directly by satellite to Brittany. (quoted from Wikipedia)

*It was the accepted practice in Babylon 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer, and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the honey month, which we know today as the honeymoon. * (thanks Skip!)

This is what a DXpedition looked like 30 years ago.

ARRL "Antenna Expert" to Retire

R. Dean Straw, N6BV, best known to Amateur Radio operators as the "ARRL antenna expert," has announced his retirement, effective March 31. Straw's main responsibility at ARRL has been shepherding and shaping *The ARRL Antenna Book* since he took over as editor in 1993 from Jerry Hall, K1TD.

"Jerry was one of my Elmers in Hawaii back in the early 1960s. He had been the editor of *The Antenna Book* for many years, and when he decided to retire he suggested I put my name in for the position of editor," Straw said. "At that time, I had been in the marine electronics industry for more than 20 years and I wanted to 'give something back' to this great hobby we call Amateur Radio. Now, looking back, it's been a gratifying 15 years that I've been privileged to work at ARRL."

While at ARRL, Straw specialized in antennas, transmission lines and propagation. "I have been able to utilize my training as an electronics engineer in other areas where I could help out. I've enjoyed being associated with some remarkable people at ARRL -- folks who are truly dedicated not only to preserving the legacy of Amateur Radio, but to taking Amateur Radio forward in the 21st century."

n his 15 year tenure at ARRL, Straw served as Senior Assistant Technical Editor in the Publications Group. He was Editor of *The ARRL Antenna Book* for five Editions (17th-21st Editions), Editor of *The ARRL Antenna Compendium* series (Volumes 4-7), as well as several editions of *The ARRL Handbook*. He was co-author of *Simple and Fun Antennas for Hams* with Chuck Hutchinson, K8CH.

A frequent contributor to *QST* (he most recently served as the handling editor for "Hints & Kinks" column) and *NCJ*, Straw has been Editor of numerous ARRL books: *ON4UN's Low-Band DXing* (4th Edition), *Low-Profile Amateur Radio*, *The ARRL DXCC Handbook*, *DXing on the Edge*,

Amateur Radio on the Move, *Antenna Zoning for the Radio Amateur* and the ARRL Continuing Education *Antenna Modeling* course.

ARRL Publications Manager and *QST* Editor Steve Ford, WB8IMY, said, "Back when I first joined the HQ staff, Dean Straw was the man who introduced me to the wonders of ladder line. Before I encountered Dean, I had never heard of ladder line, and I had no idea that this strange-looking feedline could be used with an antenna tuner, giving multiband HF operation with one ordinary wire dipole. Needless to say, it worked -- Dean has been my antenna Elmer ever since. Through all his books and *QST* articles over the years, Dean has fulfilled the same Elmer role for many. He will be greatly missed."

Straw said, "The Lord has been good to me -- how many people can truly say that their vocation has been their beloved avocation too? My wife has consistently maintained over the years: 'You're having entirely too much fun in this job!'"

Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim, or handle, of their ceramic cups. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. 'Wet your whistle' is the phrase inspired by this practice. (thanks Skip)

"Well it all started when I was a child...I felt that I had difficulty communicating with people..."

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

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Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues ----------$15.00 _____
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Call/Name badge ---------$10.00 _____
Optional ARRL membership
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